

LE BULLETIN

Institut Simone de Beauvoir Institute

NEWSLETTER

Spring/printemps 1984

Université Concordia
Concordia University

I hear the sound of the wind
in my veins
my feet are dug deep
into the cool black earth

I am here for a reason
though it often is lost in my pain
I sometimes capture it
and try not to
cage it away

I have had no beginning
my past voices whisper to me
I am here for a reason
though I often forget
I might not be

I hear the sound of the sea
slap against the sand
in my dreams
my past lives follow
I am here for a reason
though I doubt
forever I will be.

Johanne Poirier

UPCOMING EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S WEEK - MARCH 5 - 10, 1984

The following events are co-sponsored by the Concordia Women's Collective and the Women's Union of McGill University:

Monday, March 5

- 11:45 - 13:00 Films by women directors
Hall building
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Room H635-2
Please call 879-2852 for further info.
- 14:00 - 16:00 Susan Cole, writer, lecturer and editor of
the feminist journal "Broadside" will lecture
on pornography
Hall building
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Room H110
Please call 879-2852 for further info.
- 16:00 McGill/Concordia Women's Art Show Vernissage
Wine and cheese will be served
Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Rooms 107 & 108
- 19:30 Poetry Arts Café
An evening of readings and performances
by local artists
Café Commun/Commune, 201 Milton
Phone 842-3344

Tuesday, March 6

- 11:00 - 15:00 Art Show
An exhibition of art by women, all media
Union building, 3480 McTavish
Rooms 107 & 108
- 13:15 - 15:15 Films by Women Directors
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Room H635-2
Please call 879-2852 for further info.
- 19:00 Mary Meigs, lesbian feminist writer and artist
Author of Lily Briscoe: A Self Portrait and
The Medusa Head will give a lecture on her life
and work. Open to women only.
Arts Building, 853 Sherbrooke West, Council Room

EVENTS.....

Wednesday, March 7:

- 11:00 - 15:00 Art Show
An exhibition of art by women, all media
Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Rooms 107 & 108
- 11:45 - 13:00 Films by women directors
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Room H635-2
Please call 879-2852 for further info
- 12:00 - 13:00 "Sexist Seeds Sow Sexist Trees", a film by
seven high-school students, made in conjunction
with the 3rd Avenue Women's Resource Center
of Montreal. Discussion to follow.
Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Room 310
- 13:00 - 14:00 "Rape is a Social Disease", a video by
Women in Focus of Vancouver.
Discussion to follow.
Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Room 310
- 13:30 - 16:00 "Women in Arms" , the film.
Followed by discussion on women in Nicaragua
led by Shana Sapo, local freelance writer.
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Room H333-6
- 14:00 - 15:00 "Sexist Seeds Sow Sexist Trees", repeat
screening followed by discussion.
Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Room 310
- 19:00 Marge Piercy, American feminist, prose and
poetry writer, author of Small Changes,
Woman on the Edge of Time and other well-known
works will lecture.
Leacock Building, 855 Sherbrooke West, Room 132

Thursday, March 8

- 11:00 - 15:00 Art Show
An exhibition of art by women, all media
Union building, 3480 McTavish, Room 107 & 108
- 13:15 - 14:30 Adele Wiseman, Distinguished Canadian author
of Crackpot and The Sacrifice, writer-in-residence
1983-4 at Concordia will lecture on
"Women Writers in Canada"
1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. West, Room H635-2

EVENTS.....

Friday, March 9

- 11:00 - 15:00 Art Show
 An exhibition of art by women, all media
 Union Building, 3480 McTavish, Rooms 107 & 108
- 18:00 20:00 Films by women directors
 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Room H635-2
 Please call 879-2852 for more info

Saturday, March 10

- 11:00 National Demonstration for International
 Women's Day
 Meet the women of the Concordia Women's Collective
 and the McGill Women's Union in the lobby of
 the Union Building, 3480 McTavish
 We will then proceed to the main demonstration
- 20:00 International Women's Week Dance
 Music! Drinks! Party Fun!
 Women only: Admission \$2.50 at the door
 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Room H 651

All above events are free admission, unless otherwise stated

For further information:

Concordia University	879-2852
Concordia Women's Collective	879-4510
McGill University	392-4311
McGill Women's Union	392-8920

* * * * *

Centre d'Information et de Référence Pour Femmes présent:

Groupe de discussion femmes et sexualité:

6 mars Grossesse
 avoir ou ne pas avoir d'enfants? Pourquoi?
 Quelles sont les repercussions psychologiques
 et sociales de la réalité que vous vivez ou
 que vous voulez vivre?

13 et 20 mars Rencontres et communication

Nous nous questionnerons sur nos attentes face
 aux relations que nous vivons avec des hommes
 ou des femmes

EVENTS....

27 mars

Dysfonctions

Nous donnerons un aperçu des différents problèmes qui peuvent vivre les femmes et les hommes au niveau de la sexualité

"HEJIRA"

A monthly creative journal which seeks to elicit the work of women in and around the McGill Community

- available in local bookstores, price \$1.00
- welcomes women contributors from Concordia - poetry, short fiction, graphics, photos



BOOK REVIEWS

by Patricia Morley

On being a woman in the nineteenth century - SUFFER AND BE STILL.
Women in the Victorian Age. Edited by Martha Vicinus. Indiana
 University Press \$15.00. 4.95 pb. 239 pages

THE VICTORIAN GIRL AND THE FEMININE IDEAL. By Deborah Gorham.
 Indiana University Press \$20.00, 223 pp.

These volumes are--and should be--disturbing. They show where many of our modern attitudes and role models come from. As Martha Vicinus remarks, the essays in her anthology "document the feminine stereotypes women struggled against a hundred years ago, but only partly defeated. They should serve as a reminder not only of the distance women have travelled, but of the miles yet to go."

An accomplished industrial revolution resulted in two spheres of work and home. Men ruled in the market place. An idealised version of home and family, presided over by an idealised wife and mother, is the central image in Victorian literature, art and social commentary. Deborah Gorham shrewdly suggests that the cult of domesticity helped to relieve the tensions between Christian morality and business competition: religious values at home and capitalist ones at the office allowed the Victorians "to achieve an efficient moral balance."

Suffer and Be Still is a stimulating collection of ten essays, including studies by Kate Millett, Elaine and English Showalter, and Jill Conway. Barbara Kanner's long, well-organized bibliography will be of value to feminist scholars and to general readers. Kanner has grouped five hundred items under seven headings such as law, employment, education, and social questions.

Jeanne Peterson's analysis of the Victorian governess, that standard fixture in many a nineteenth-century novel, shows the contradictions inherent in her position. Society demanded that governesses be ladies but forbade ladies to work for money. In effect, Peterson uses the governess's situation to demonstrate not only how the family functioned but also the values, problems and fears of the Victorian middle class.

Gorham works over the same terrain with somewhat different methods. Her focus is on the young woman and on Victorian perceptions of girlhood: "Unlike an adult woman, a girl could be perceived as a wholly unambiguous model of female dependence, childlike simplicity and sexual purity." By natural progression, these ideas led to ideas of femininity, of family and society at large.

Gorham's evidence comes largely from diaries, journals, letters and autobiographies. She provides the charm of fiction, through a focus on

BOOK REVIEWS.....

the individual, and the authority of history. Since her examples cover a wide range of circumstances and classes, her generalizations seem well supported in fact. Her biographical sketches range from famous women such as Florence Nightingale and Marie Stopes to unknowns whose lives are often even more fascinating. I like the story of the woman whose only source of sexual information was a book called Esoteric Anthropology, hidden in her mother's dresser drawer.

This is sound, lively scholarship which should interest a great many readers.

Some bones worth chewing - WOMEN AND RELIGION IN AMERICA. Volume 2: The Colonial and Revolutionary Periods. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller, General Editors. Harper and Row \$24.95, 464 pp

The second of a three-volume series on the subject of women and religion in America is an impressive collection by prominent women scholars, specialists in their fields. The composite portrait of women from incredibly diverse cultures and backgrounds, all moved by religious faith and all struggling with forms of prejudice and oppression, makes a strong tribute to the human spirit. These essays are not light reading, but the bones and gristle are well worth the effort.

Women and Religion in America gives us first-hand accounts taken from diaries, letters, civil and religious records and formal histories. The format, which links introductions and overviews to primary documents, provides a valuable resource. Areas covered include native Indian women; Spanish, French and English settlers; women in Puritan New England; Southerners, both black and white; and various sectarian and utopian groups.

The dominant themes of history, religion and ethnicity, all focused on women, should interest feminists, historians, theologians, and those of us who are struggling to understand contemporary relationships between the sexes and the changing social patterns these entail.

Some of the most interesting revelations concerning prejudices towards women, Blacks and native Americans are in a section on witchcraft in Rosemary Keller's chapter on first-generation Puritanism in New England. The Puritans held two contradictory views of the nature of women: as man's companion and mate, an equal: and as a creature in whom the devil prevailed "more easily and oftener" than in men. Reformers introduced the "subordinate but equal" dilemma which came to characterize Puritan thought.

Dr. Ruether is a well-known Christian feminist, author of fifteen books. She and Dr. Keller team-teach at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and together direct the Institute for Study of Women in the Church. The Church may appear to be moving slowly towards the equality of the sexes before God, but it is moving.

.....

A new monthly covers feminist publications. THE WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS. Wellesley Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, Mass. Vol. I, No. 5. \$1.50, 20 pp. Sub. \$12.00 (individual) and \$25.00 (institutions)

Women's Review is a monthly publication in newspaper format which began life in 1983. Its reason for existence is indisputable. There is a gap in review-coverage of feminist studies both academic and popular, and the problem is not simply the result of unsympathetic male editors. One aspect of the Women's Movement which has been gathering a fresh head of steam over the last two decades is the fast-growing body of feminist writing which is now pouring out of North American presses. Neither established review periodicals nor the media generally can keep up with it, and most of them aren't even trying.

These reviews are full-length essays which locate current books in social, historical and other contexts. The reviewers know their stuff, and temper negative comments with praise. If this is sisterhood, reviewers in general should take notice. One of my pet peeves is the cheap shot, fired by a reviewer who thinks more of setting him (or her) self up as a wit than s/he does of giving the reader a fair idea of a publication.

The attractive format includes occasional new poems, drawings (there are two here from Judy Chicago's The Dinner Party), advertisements for books, and Letters to the Editor. Many journals have no room for the latter. The letters in this issue are long and interesting. They include praise and criticism of earlier issues. Authors write to dispute reviewers' interpretations and judgements. More such forums might go a long way to foster responsible reviewing.

Highlights in this issue include Joy Parks' review of the first twenty-four numbers of Sinister Wisdom, and Emily Toth's coverage of five books on writing romance fiction. Sinister Wisdom is a lesbian journal begun in 1976 which has passed through three editorial changes and has come to represent a wide spectrum of serious feminist thought and practical politics.

Toth, who belongs to the rare breed of serious academics who write romance fiction, notes that the disdain with which the genre is generally met reflects masculine preferences for mysteries, westerns and sci-fi. This excellent article pinpoints strengths and weaknesses in the individual books while setting the genre in a psychological and philosophical context.

Nine thoughtful review-articles range from the militarization of women's lives, older Black women in the South, Jewish-feminism, and new feminist poetry and journals, to quilt-making as an art. I read Women's Review from stem to stern, an activity that took some two hours, and found it good.

* * * * *

WOMEN GRADUATE STUDENTS OPEN HOUSE MARCH 16, 1984

by Victorya E. Monkman

This is an invitation to all women graduate students who want to meet other women in graduate studies.

Several weeks ago a number of us were sitting around chatting after a talk by Dr. Ursula Franklin, professor of metallurgy at the University of Toronto. We came to the realization that the frustrations we were experiencing result not so much from our individual lives but from our shared, common status as women in graduate studies.

Among the points raised were:

- Isolation: Many women feel isolated in their departments. In non-traditional disciplines, we may be the only women working in the area. Even when several women are in the same graduate program, we may not know each other. This situation is particularly acute for women from the francophone community, other areas of Canada, and other cultures who come to Concordia for graduate studies.
- Confidence: We have difficulty maintaining our confidence that our perceptions are valid, that we are in fact intelligent, when the feedback of the environment is non-supportive, though not necessarily hostile. Carol Gilligan's research on the "differential access of the genders to certain kinds of understanding" (In a Different Voice) indicates that "women tend to see the world in terms of connectedness (and are over threatened by isolation)".
- Time: We never seem to have enough time. Not only do we have our responsibilities for research, writing and study, but many of us have jobs. Additionally, those of us who have children usually have the primary responsibility for childcare, food preparation and household maintenance. Furthermore, when we are involved in a particularly demanding piece of graduate scholarship, we do not have the time (or energy) for mates who may or may not be supportive of our academic ambitions.
- Credibility: Our very presence in graduate studies, which is still perceived as a "masculine" domain, is problematic. We have a sense of needing to over-justify in our work. We cannot be sure, like our male colleagues, that our assumptions (about the value of "objectivity" for example) will go unchallenged. We are careful to avoid "feminine", emotional thought and behaviour which we know to be devalued in "male-stream" thought. There is

WOMEN GRADUATE STUDENTS OPEN HOUSE.....

sometimes confusion between what we see as the conclusions to be drawn from our research and what our advisors understand them to be. Those of us working on the new scholarship on women find that many advisors are neither familiar with, nor interested in the literature.

Funding:

We find it difficult to obtain fellowships and bursaries. In heavily-funded non-traditional areas, biases still exist for women scholars. The disciplines in which women tend to work do not have high-priority in male-stream thought and thus funding is limited.

Following this discussion, I spoke to other women in graduate studies to see whether these perceptions were particular to those present that afternoon. All those I contacted identified strongly with the points we had raised.

The situation which we felt could be most readily changed is that of our isolation. Today women are once again reaching the numbers in higher education which had developed in the 1920's. We do not need to feel so alone. There is a long tradition of women scholars.

We thought you might like to get to know each other, to provide and receive encouragement, friendship and information. We have organized a party March 16, 1984 from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Drop in for coffee or a chat - for 5 minutes or an hour (as your busy schedule permits), in the Graduate Students' Lounge at the Royal George Apartments #5A (corner Bishop and de Maisonneuve). If you cannot make it, call us! Elsa (482-0320, ext. 534), Martha (879-7347), Viki (879-8521), G.S.A. Office (879-7219). Looking forward to meeting you. Bienvenue à toutes!

* * * * *

BARBARA MACKAY, NOT A "TOP GIRL?"

by Elsa Schieder

On April 11-15, Caryl Churchill's Top Girls will be playing at Concordia's Chameleon Theatre (Loyola Campus). Top Girls' director is Barbara Mackay, the first woman faculty member to direct a full-scale production put on by the Drama Department.

Last year - perhaps influenced by Concordia's Status of Women Report - the Drama Department's Selection Committee felt it was time to do a piece that dealt with women's issues and provided a number of roles for women. Valerie Kaelin suggested Top Girls. Not only is it by a woman; it has roles for fifteen actresses. When someone proposed hiring a woman to direct the play - all the faculty who teach performing are men - Barbara had a click: "Why not me?" Though she hadn't directed before, her involvement with theatre goes back over twenty years and she's been teaching Drama in Education at Concordia for more than a decade. She's recently been shifting direction.

I recently went to talk with Barbara about her views on feminism and her interpretation of Top Girls. I (a self-defined feminist) saw the show in London and was disturbed by some of what I felt it was saying. She's a feminist: "How long have I called myself a feminist? Five or six years." She read Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex ("the first significant book"), at 20, 21, and Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique when it came out a few years later. But the information was just there, didn't lead to much until '71, '72. At that time, she was hit by overwhelming feelings of despair and anger - "for myself, my mother, grandmother, sister, and so on." Her quite supportive husband had quite something to put up with: "4000 years of anger!"

Since then she's become increasingly aware of what other women are saying. In the last few years, she's also found more and more support around: "women are talking more and more to each other." Some of her current concerns are: "Who are we as women? Why does so much violence happen to us? How have we been acculturated to put up with these things?" Her interest in the impact of acculturation helped draw her to Top Girls.

Top Girls begins with a dinner given to celebrate Marlene's promotion. The five guests are women of achievement from the past. It turns out that some have been exceptional at the expense of other women; all have paid a high price for "success." The dinner ends in chaos.

The rest of the play depicts scenes from Marlene's life in the year before her promotion. As might be expected, she too has won by losing; further, Joyce, her sister, has paid part of the cost. Joyce has raised Marlene's illegitimate daughter, Angie. Taking care of Angie, according to Joyce, caused Joyce to miscarry her own child.

I wouldn't have objected had the play even suggested the possibility of other ways of getting ahead, ways which are less oppressive of women. Such routes are, I believe, available to some women. But the dinner party at the beginning did anything but hint at that.

BARBARA MACKAY....

Barbara had two initial responses to Top Girls: "First, I felt: what a powerfully intelligent woman Caryl Churchill is. She writes such brilliant dialogue. And the structure is interesting. It's a play of ideas."

The other thing that struck Barbara - who has not had children but has been professionally successful - was that every woman in the play somehow or other had to give up her children: "In Top Girls, the price of success, of leaving the conventional world, is the loss of the reproductive function."

As for "this whole business of women stepping on other women to make it to the top", Barbara pointed out that Churchill wrote Top Girls immediately after Margaret Thatcher came into office. She was reacting very strongly to that. So on one level, the play's message can be read as: "Don't leave your child. Look at the consequences."

But Barbara considers that the play operates on various levels: "Churchill is a strong socialist. A lot of her attacks are on class, which is something a lot stronger in Great Britain than here." Further, Barbara has seen the New York production of the play. In it, Marlene, the central character, wasn't played as a uni-dimensional bitch but as a very warm-hearted woman with some harsh sides that come from her operating with no positive models of behaviour and without other women in high managerial positions who could provide the support to break the hierarchical structure: "The play is a warning that we must find an alternative way of having power without betraying our own integrity."

Then too, Marlene isn't completely dehumanized, though in the last scene, Marlene is demoralized and struggling with her sister, that scene takes place before the rest of the play: it's from a year ago. So the woman we're actually seeing is successful and fairly together. The relationship between her and the women she works with is especially supportive.

Joyce may blame her sister for her miscarriage. The fact is that Joyce wasn't exhausted only because she was looking after Angie, but also because of a very difficult early marriage. Marlene also indicates she would have an abortion or give away the child if Joyce hadn't wanted it.

Barbara's comments on the relationship between Isabella, one of the guests at the dinner party, and her never-seen sister, Henny, are relevant: "The argument can be: isn't it terrible that Isabella had to step on her sister in order to accomplish what she did at great pain to herself? On the other hand, would it have been better for the two of them to share the structure of oppression? Further, is moving out of that structure stepping on whoever is left behind?" The relationship between Isabella and Henny in some ways parallels that one between Marlene and Joyce.

On yet another level, Barbara considers that Churchill is saying we lose in all directions" Churchill is giving us the hell of each of these women's lives. I think the voice underneath the whole play is that of

.....

BARBARA MACKAY....

a despairing humanist."

But most of all, for Barbara:

What we have here is a series of women who behave in a certain way because they come from oppressive, hierarchical, patriarchal structures. Caryl Churchill is saying that right at this moment in history, we can begin to take some power. But there's a price to be paid. She wants us to know that.

I have some personal power, some sense of myself in the workplace, and I haven't come up stomping on people's feelings.

But if you buy into the capitalist, hierarchical structure where most power resides in this world...

I know that I respect Caryl Churchill very much. And I do like to respect an author's intentions. I think that, with this production, I have.

I don't know if I'll be able to see Top Girls through something close to Barbara Mackay's eyes. I do know I'm looking forward to what will have to be an extremely interesting production.

* * * * *

LE BULLETIN/NEWSLETTER

Co-editors: Lucie Lequin
Patricia Morley

Production
Editor: Joyce Carson

Abonnement annuel/Annual subscription:

\$ 6.00 Institution
\$ 4.00 Particulière/s / Individuals
\$ 2.50 étudiant/e/s / Students

Cheques must be payable to CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR
INSTITUTE

Les chèques doivent être faits à l'ordre de: UNIVERSITÉ CONCORDIA
INSTITUT SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

1455 boul. de Maisonneuve O.
Montréal, Québec H3G 1M8

WINNIPEG PEACE CONFERENCE

by Cynthia Davis

While the Cruise and Pershing missiles are gradually being deployed in Europe, 170 activists from Canadian groups and coalitions met in Winnipeg at the beginning of February to discuss disarmament strategies for the 80's.

The conference, organized by the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign (PPCC), was held at the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature. It was a historical event in that it was the first national meeting of labour unions, religious groups, women's associations, native groups, students and professionals around the issue of peace and disarmament.

The formation of a national coalition was a theme of the conference. The consensus was that a national grouping was necessary but that it would be premature to work out its structures at this point.

Québec was well represented at the conference with 15 delegates from groups such as the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN), the Central d'Enseignement du Québec (CEQ), and Concordia University.

The primary aim of the organizers was to rally support around the PPCC campaign. The campaign was conceived in Saltspring Island, B.C., by a small disarmament group. It is a year-long program of activities designed to make the Canadian peace movement more effective politically. Its objectives are: to stop the testing of the cruise missile in Canada; to have Canada officially declared a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone; to redirect spending on arms so as to fund human needs.

When asked about the fine points of the petition, Montreal organizer, Dorothy Rosenberg said, "The government is the ass-end of a petition. It's the public education and the process that is important."

The Role of Women at the Conference

Although the ratio of male to female delegates was 3:2, the women as a group played a special role in this conference. A women's caucus was organized early on and this forum was used to apply a feminist critique to the arms race and the peace movement as well.

The caucus agreed that militarism is one manifestation of a patriarchal structure which operates on the "bully system." This system relies on the threat or the use of force as the bottom line of relationships, whether they be between people or nations. This is the rhetorical (as opposed to the economic) basis of the arms race. The nuclear nations say to each other "don't upset us or we'll blow you to hell."

The feminist analysis is ultimately a hopeful one, saying that the

.....

WINNIPEG PEACE CONFERENCE.....

patriarchy is silly and dangerous, and can be changed! Communication and non-violent action can replace threats as the bottom line of relations.

The women's caucus also questioned some of the structures of the conference itself, pointing out that too many of the activities were in a lecture format. This format, the women noted, gives the impression of hierarchy in which the 'masses' are 'educated' by the 'experts'. Small group workshops, in which every person has the opportunity to participate fully, were encouraged.

During heated debates, such as on whether to include the American nuclear freeze concept in the petition, it was often the women who suggested workable compromises, middle-way solutions.

The women's role was questioner as well as peacemaker. At one point Kay McPherson, of the NACSW-SC (National Action Committee on the Status of Women - Survival Committee), asked the delegates how many of them left their wives at home to take care of the children. As a wave of embarrassment swept over a segment of the audience, Kay advocated that the peace movement should look inward, as well as outward, to see if we are acting in accordance with our own values while we are trying to create a new society.

For further information about the PPCC write: 600 Bank St., Ottawa, Ont. K1S 3T6 or phone (613) 230-7311 National Office, Ottawa or (514) 738-3663 Montreal.

Women's Peace Camp

The Winnipeg Peace Conference was graced by the presence of Kate and Les from the Women's Peace Camp in Cole Bay, Saskatchewan. The Peace Camp is near the border of the Primrose Bombing Range, where the Canadian government plans to test the USAF Cruise Missile. These women live on the frontline of the battle for peace. They are now in a small cabin (sans plumbing) in a Métis village where the unemployment rate is 95%. They are drawing attention to the very real and very exploited people who live in an area which the government would have us consider "uninhabited".

There is a uranium mine not far from their camp which regularly spills radioactive water into Key Lake, northern Saskatchewan. Kate told me that they recently received official word not to use one of the rivers near their camp as a water source. The government did not provide an explanation for this edict.

Uranium is the raw material for nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons.

.....

WINNIPEG PEACE CONFERENCE.....

These women, in their graceful determination to live what they believe, were for me the most inspiring people at the conference. They asked me to tell the folks back home that they welcome (and need) communication and support from concerned groups and individuals.

Their address is: KIPICHISICHAKANISIK
Women's Peace Camp
Cole Bay, Saskatchewan
SOM OMO
Mother Earth

* * * * *

THE GAZETTE 21-2-84

Risk of cruise crash 5 times what Ottawa claims

By PETER CALAMAI
Southam News

OTTAWA — The Department of National Defence, using outdated statistics, is concealing the real risk of a cruise missile crashing while under flight test over Northwest Canada.

An official report on environmental risks, made public yesterday, quotes a consulting firm's 1979 study, predicting 6.5 "unplanned ter-

minations of flight" per 1,000 flying hours.

But it ignores the same company's revised estimate, in 1980, of 30 crashes per 1,000 hours — nearly five times as frequent.

The second study is quoted extensively in the National Defence Department report but not on the issue of danger of a crash.

The two studies, done for the U.S. military by J. H. Wiggins Co. of California, both assume failure of the

motor, flight controls or guidance system would cause an "immediate termination of flight" with the missile "impacting" into the ground, producing widespread debris and possibly a fireball.

Wiggins changed its estimates after tests showed higher-than-expected risk of engine failure.

In November, Defence Minister Jean-Jacques Blais told Alberta audiences a crash along the 2,500-kilometre test route would cause little

more damage than that of a light airplane. The first test is expected within the next month.

But the environmental assessment made public yesterday, dated Sept. 30, 1983, compares the cruise to a light aircraft for noise only, not for potential crash damage.

Assuming its emergency parachute opens, the 6.3-metre-long missile would scatter debris up to 60 metres from the crash point, says the National Defence study.

DR. URSULA FRANKLIN

by Louise Dunn

Dr. Ursula Franklin a Professor of Engineering at the University of Toronto, and a noted speaker on peace, disarmament and women - spoke at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute on January 13, 1984.

The thrust of her talk was to sensitize the audience to the fact that many women in high-level positions in industry, medicine, etc., are vulnerable to being assimilated into the dominant culture. This usually means taking on many of the dominant values and traditions in order to be accepted and often results in alienation towards other women. Unless we as women and feminists offer them our support they will really have little alternative but to become 'one of the boys'.

Dr. Franklin compared these women to the immigrant who comes to North America. She or he is prepared and anxious to work for the dominant group, but she or he is usually not willing to be completely absorbed to abandon their roots, their language, their food, religion and so on. We, as women, would do well to take our cue from these immigrants as they are actually a great source of inspiration.

She also pointed out that it is usually quite difficult for women to adjust to technology, primarily because technology (as it stands) is not suited to the needs of women. What we have going for us, however, is our experience and our "copability", developed because of the numerous roles we have always had to balance. We have also learned to allow for a margin of error - something a computer cannot do.

It is up to us to humanize technology if we want it to work for us as careerists and as people who nurture other human beings. Therefore it is important for us to be part of the process and we are encouraging, in fact pushing, young women today to enter the technological fields. However we are not preparing them for what lies ahead: namely, sexism. This is another reason why it is so important for us to bond and to support these women. We don't want them to become discouraged.

Dr. Franklin concluded by saying that we as women need a much better understanding of the nature of technology and of our own history as women, not all of it is a history of oppression. It is time to celebrate our womanhood and to share what we have with each other in order to empower ourselves - to really develop our own sense of community.

* * * * *

PROBLEMES DES CENTRES DE FEMMES SUBVENTIONNE PAR L'ETAT

par Gizelle Morin (étudiante en études de la femme et agente de recherche pour Info-Femmes inc., centre d'information et d'éducation populaire pour femmes, à Pointe-aux-Trembles)

Avec les années et la croissance aigue du mouvement féministe, des groupes d'aide pour femmes se sont formés dans les domaines qui touchaient de près les conditions de vie environnantes défavorables des femmes. Lors d'un recensement exécuté par le Secrétariat d'Etat en septembre 83, on dénombrait 64 centres de femmes au Québec, lesquels étaient subventionnés majoritairement par les gouvernements fédéral et provincial. Ceux-ci, s'attribuant un pouvoir de gestionnaire, utilisent à mauvais escient leur mode financement vis-à-vis des centres.

Les gouvernements préconisent un type de financement où chaque subvention est accordée sur une base temporaire. Le temps alloué pour un projet dépend de plusieurs facteurs et ceux-ci sont difficilement identifiables. Disons qu'ils relèvent du bon vouloir des bailleurs de fond... Dans une enquête menée auprès de 41 centres pour déterminer le pourcentage de leur temps consacré à chercher du financement, 21 ont répondu avoir dépensé 38% de leur temps, alors que d'autres admettaient tout simplement que c'était un souci constant. On ne peut que constater, devant l'évidence de ces chiffres, que beaucoup d'énergies sont inadéquatement drainées dans les procédures bureaucratiques alors que tant d'interventions sont requises auprès des usagers des centres.

Les subventions étant toujours octroyées sur une base temporaire, les femmes qui travaillent sur ces projets doivent sans cesse revendiquer pour conserver leur emploi car elles sont considérées inéligibles pour la prochaine subvention, et ceci dû aux normes de sélection des programmes de création d'emplois. De cette aberrante exigence, il arrive que des personnes compétentes sont remplacées par d'autres, inexpérimentées, ce qui a pour effet d'empêcher une continuité dans l'action. Aussi, il y aurait lieu de mentionner la sous-rémunération du travail. Toutes les femmes oeuvrant au sein d'organismes féministes tolèrent malgré tout cette situation parce que le désir de travailler à l'amélioration des conditions de vie des femmes est leur objectif premier.

La lourdeur et la lenteur des procédures administratives exaspèrent les responsables des centres qui doivent gérer les budgets des projets. La planification des activités devient une tâche ardue lorsque les versements de fond tardent à rentrer.

A toutes ces difficultés, certains centres disparaissent, non parce que leurs services ne sont pas en demande, mais parce qu'ils ne cadrent plus dans les priorités gouvernementales.

.....

PROBLEMES DES CENTRES DE FEMMES.....

"Le gouvernement, par sa mainmise sur les décisions relatives au financement, perpétue la croyance selon laquelle les femmes sont inaptes ou "pas prêtes" à se diriger elles-mêmes et à être responsables dans leur lutte pour l'égalité et la justice."** La participation des femmes dans l'économie nous donne pourtant le droit d'user des fonds publics pour défendre la justice envers les femmes.

** Saskatchewan Action Committee Status of Women, The Pink Papers, mars 1983

* * * * *

SELFPORTRAIT, WOMEN OF QUEBEC IN THE 80's

.....is an undertaking by three women in collaboration with women's groups in Montréal and the province. The results will come together in a photo-book, showing Québec's women taking their lives in their own hands.

The past 15 years have been hard and strenuous, and women in Québec have been growing and stretching and doing the kinds of things they never dreamed of doing before - and doing them well.

It is amazing that the changes set in motion by the women's movement are noticeable over and over again. Role reversals, househusbands, assertiveness training, men-talk groups, first child at the age of 40, women busdrivers, etc., etc..

Selfportrait...will be a look at what women in Québec have been able to do for themselves and for the changing society in which they live.

Look out for Selfportrait, women of Québec in the 80's...around the 8th of March!!!

* * * * *

CHILDREN OF THE EARTH

Our Bible
is the book of war
and we who worship peace
are devils

Our God
is cold and grey
and distant
and will make love
to the earth

His love
is torture, pain and black
orgasm in destruction

And we who worship life
break one commandment

We who worship peace
worship Satan

We are the antichrist
because we hate destruction
we don't want christ
to whither and die bleeding
or mary to be beaten
so we are devils

We belong to the earth
the sky, the sea
so we are the enemy.

by Johanne Poirier

PRENDRE LE RISQUE!!!

par Louise Lafortune, étudiante en études de la femme

J'ai pris beaucoup de temps à décider ce que j'écrirais dans mon article pour le journal de l'Institut. J'ai quelques fois remis en question même le fait d'avoir accepté de produire un texte. Je voulais un texte parfait. J'ai, par la suite, réfléchi et je crois importante l'expression des femmes quelqu'en soit la forme.

J'ai donc décidé d'écrire,

AU RISQUE DE ME TROMPER.

Les femmes et le risque

Tenter
Expérimenter
Oser
Risquer
Essayer

Des actions qui font souvent peur.

Pourquoi?

Elles signifient le changement
la remise en question
le bouleversement
l'affrontement.

Mais c'est pour moi la seule façon de vivre, de signifier le mouvement.

Le risque n'est pas facile à accepter, il suppose un degré de confiance, d'autonomie.

Demeurer dans le passé, vouloir tout connaître le futur, le contrôler, quelle inertie!!!

Nous, les femmes, sommes devant le choix de risquer des gestes, des paroles: la seule façon d'amener le changement ou de rester dans notre situation actuelle d'oppression.

Nous sommes souvent arrêtées devant des demandes de ce que sera le futur. Ces questions nous laissent souvent silencieuses. Il est certain que les réponses, explications ne sont pas toutes faites. Ce n'est sûrement pas la publicité des journaux qui nous les donnent.

Pourquoi ne pas tenter des réponses?

Pourquoi ne pas retourner la question par une autre?

.....

PRENDRE LE RISQUE.....

Ne peut-on pas énumérer ce que l'on ne veut plus?

Nous en sommes à créer de nouveaux modèles. Ils ne peuvent différer des modèles passés que si nous faisons preuve d'imagination et que nous laissons place à notre spontanéité.

Des erreurs?

Nous en ferons.

Des critiques?

Nous en aurons.

Sans risques, aucun risque d'être critiquées.

Sans risques, aucun risque de vivre des changements.

NE SERAIT-CE PAS PAR LE RISQUE, LA MEILLEUR FACON DE TOURVER, DE VIVRE NOTRE AUTHENTICITE?

* * * * *

P L E A S E N O T E ! ! !

Florent Bolte (937-3941) would like to hear from anyone who is interested in helping children produce their own magazine. The group is called "Les créations des enfants" and meets in St. Henri, near Lionel Groulx metro. The children are aged 12-19, the time is Mondays 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. "Writing sessions" in English and/or French are needed.

* * * * *

LA PORNOGRAPHIE OU LE SEXE COMMERCIALISE.

par Linda Cormier.

La pornographie est devenue depuis les dix, vingt dernières années une industrie mondiale des plus lucratives; rien qu'au Québec, elle a rapporté en 1981, 260 millions de dollars. En 1980, une salle de cinéma sur six (60/371) au Québec est spécialisée exclusivement dans le film pornographique; ces salles ont effectivement attiré le 1/6 (3 millions sur 18 millions) du total des spectateurs de cinéma cette année-là. On peut se demander si la pornographie n'est pas devenue le nouveau "sport" national des Québécois?

Un fait invraisemblable, mais néanmoins véridique. En 1979, on dénombrait aux Etats-Unis, quatre fois plus d'établissements spécialisés dans la vente de matériel pornographique... que le Mac Donald! Le moins qu'on puisse dire, c'est que la pornographie est une industrie propère...

De gros intérêts économiques sont ici en jeu et pour les pornocrates - en raison des profits à empocher - et pour les gouvernements - à cause des taxes à prélever. Mais cela excuse-t-il la violence faite aux femmes et aux enfants dans le matériel pornographique, où la sexualité n'est qu'un prétexte pour l'exploitation de la violence?

Car la pornographie est une manifestation de mépris et de violence envers les femmes. Les images utilisées par le cinéma, les journaux et les revues pornographiques véhiculent la soumission des femmes, car, affirme-t-on, elles sont foncièrement masochistes, et aiment en conséquence, être dominées.

La pornographie contribue donc à donner une fausse image de la réalité et de la sexualité des femmes, et dégrade les rapports entre les êtres humains (hommes, enfants, femmes). Il ne s'agit pas de s'opposer à toute manifestation explicite de la sexualité, mais plutôt de refuser de cautionner les structures de pouvoir (domination des hommes sur les femmes et sur les enfants, des blancs sur les noirs, etc...) représentées dans le matériel pornographique.

Le film de l'Office National du Film, C'est surtout pas de l'amour (Not a Love Story) démontre d'étendue et la croissance de la pornographie. Il en souligne également les conséquences destructives en puissance. Ce n'est pas un film facile à regarder, mais il faut aller le voir; il n'est pas agréable, mais il est instructif; il n'est pas amusant, mais il présente la réalité. Et connaître la situation, c'est déjà y mettre un frein.

Pour plus d'information, ou pour manifester votre appui, ou vous engager dans la lutte contre la pornographie, voici quelques adresses utiles:

.....

1. Regroupement féministe contre la pornographie
C.P. 308
Succ. La Cité
Montréal, Québec
H2W 2N8
2. Evaluation - Médias
C.P. 1687, Succ. H
Montréal, Québec
H3G 2N6
3. Comité contre la pornographie
Fédération des Femmes du Québec (FFQ)
6600 Berri, bureau 3115
Montréal, Québec
H2L 4E4

(P.S. Les chiffres précités dans cet article proviennent de La Presse Montréal, p. A8, le 20/03/82 et Le Devoir, p. 21, le 21/11,81.)

Bibliographie sur la pornographie

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Barry, Kathleen | <u>Female Sexual Slavery</u>
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall, 1979 |
| Carrier, Micheline | <u>La pornographie, base idéologique de l'oppression des femmes</u> , Québec, Publications Apostrophe, 1973 |
| Dworkin, Andrea | <u>Pornography : Men Possession Women</u> ,
New York, New York, Academic Press Canada, 1981 |
| Faust, Béatrice | <u>Women, Sex and Pornography</u> ,
Penguin Books, Victoria, 1981. |
| Griffin, Susan | <u>Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge Against Nature</u> , New York, New York: Harper and Row, 1981. |
| Lederer, Laura, ed. | <u>Take Back the Night: Women on Pornography</u> ,
New York, New York, Harper and Row, 1981. |

* * * * *

TOM WAUGH, AN ANTI-PATRIARCHAL MAN

by Elsa Schieder

The Fine Arts Department, in response to Concordia's Status of Women Report, has set up a committee to look into what can be done to improve the position of women within its department. On the committee are two faculty members, two support staff, two students and one part-time instructor.

Elizabeth Sacca is one of the faculty representatives. The other is Tom Waugh, from Cinema. At a meeting he didn't attend, he was nominated for the spot. He accepted it partly because no woman on the faculty would - their feeling was: why should women be wholly responsible for dealing with sexism? - and partly because of his long-standing concern with feminist issues.

I recently interviewed him: there aren't that many men interested in the Status of Women Report. Further, Tom often deals with filmic images of women in his classes. We talked about the Report and the Fine Arts committee, about what can be done within the university and what is being done, and about the causes for his sensitivity to feminist concerns.

.

ES: Did you have anything to do with the Status of Women Report, and how do you feel about it?

TW: No, I didn't have anything to do with it. But I think it's very important. I hope it gets implemented. There's probably going to be resistance to it, as there is to all top-down policy, to all bureaucratic solutions to problems. I think it will be more effective to solve this problem, the problem of the participation of women in the university, at the departmental level.

ES: Doesn't that assume departmental willingness?

TW: That's true. And I hadn't really thought about what kind of grass roots mobilization there could be in places like Engineering, to give everybody's worst example. The few aware women who are there must really feel overburdened. Hopefully, in those areas, the Report will have some effect. Keeping new positions open until a qualified woman is found could be a way of starting things moving in 'recalcitrant areas'.

ES: Within Fine Arts, are you pleased with the way the committee's worked out so far?

TW: I think so. We get along very well as a group. But we don't really have any teeth. If we ever find ourselves in a situation with unsympathetic administrators, we'll see what happens then. So far, we've discussed seven or eight areas where Fine Arts could do some work: curriculum and resources, the library, the galleries, part-time teachers, paying part-time committee members, daycare obviously, and maternity leave. We've talked about problems pertaining to students in terms of recruitment and admissions policy, and the general problem of gender streaming.

.

ES: Which means...?

TW: That disproportionately, men go into film production and women into film studies. The committee has also recommended a re-evaluation of the criteria for merit and promotion. In addition to traditional criteria - published academic work, high achievement shows - we want to add more flexible standards that may reflect different interests or areas of work on the part of women. One example might be a woman faculty member who animated a film series in a women's community centre; she should surely receive as much acknowledgement as someone who published an article in a distinguished journal.

But our basic recommendation, which has been approved, was that the committee be permanent, and on a permanent basis monitor, review and make suggestions. We were set up to give short-term input for implementing some of the university report. I think the important thing is to keep women's representation on the agenda. It shouldn't get shelved.

ES: What else, aside from committee work, can be done?

TW: Student pressure can accomplish a lot. It's good, for example, the way The Link keeps hammering away on the issue. A lot of professors are decent liberals and respond to students' suggestions.

On the level of curriculum, profs. have a lot of power. In Fine Arts I think there is room for specific courses about women - we have two in Cinema - and all the courses might incorporate women's material and an awareness of women's issues. Two other areas for more work are language - inclusive language is very important - and relationships with students. It should become almost an automatic reflex to ensure the adequate representation of women - for example, in inviting guest speakers.

There's an idea I haven't got off the ground here in Cinema yet, but it should be fun. A lot of these things are extra work, right, and we're overworked, and the university is going to try to squeeze more blood out of us next year, but the idea is for some kind of workshop on non-sexist teaching and film education that students and faculty could get together on....You have to keep the issue of sexism in view. For example, every year we get scripts that are comic treatments of sexual violence, or rape, or trivializations of rape.

ES: They're all by men?

TW: Of course. Women just don't instinctively find rape funny. What's so surprising is, the male students that write these scripts are not really vicious macho men. They're nice sympathetic men who haven't thought about what they're doing. You need to keep discussing it with them. I don't think they get a lot of criticism from other students, even women students.

ES: Are these misogynistic films produced?

TW: Some of them are and some not, and sometimes there's criticism of them from faculty members and sometimes not. Faculty members are in a difficult situation. The whole issue of censorship comes up here. I mean, I think you cannot prevent a student from making a film that's sort of in a grey area. It's different if the film is explicitly misogynist or explicitly discriminatory in another area. I think you can do something there. But where it's subjective where students can't see that this is part of a tradition of systematic misogyny...For example, I was arguing with a student this year; two actually. The scripts had nasty homophobic stereotypes in them. One student did make some revisions. The other didn't really understand.

ES: After all, how much individual responsibility do you have for improving the world?

TW: Well exactly. And I think the problem of censorship is not to be dismissed either. There's also the problem of time. I mean, here at least, we are really wiped out all of the time. It takes extra energy and initiative to be constantly working on anything beyond the call of duty.

ES: Like this interview. So quickly, what in your background, your experience, got you so concerned with feminist issues?

TW: I always tended to be politicized, in the mid-seventies as I was completing my graduate work, I couldn't help but absorb all the feminist ferment that was going on, in Film Studies. It's really dynamite what's been happening in the last ten years. It really has affected my professional work. I have at times in the past called myself a feminist man, but I don't anymore.

ES: Do you have an alternate term?

TW: Anti-patriarchal? Anti-patriarchal men have a real job to do, not only in terms of working with women, but in terms of working with men among their own clubs and cliques and whatever, and that's what's really tough.

My involvement with the gay movement is also really crucial to this. Not all gay men are anti-patriarchal but a lot of my work reflects my cultural and political involvement in the gay movement. I'm very fortunate in that I have a job in which that is possible. On a professional level I'm already, even without the feminist problematic, struggling against sexism, in terms of my research and critical writing, and as a teacher I'm struggling against homophobia, which is certainly overlapping with sexism. I have a strong political commitment to a lot of the goals of the feminist movement, outside of the academic milieu. Also, as a gay man, in every interaction in a class or with faculty, I'm really aware of sexual politics. This is one of the reasons I'm really interested

in working on this committee: that's also what its mandate is.

.

And at that point, because Tom fell asleep, we ended the interview.

* * * * *



FORUM INTERDISCIPLINAIRE POUR L'ENSEIGNEMENT ET LA RECHERCHE SUR
LES HOMOSEXUALITES (F.I. E.R.H.)

par Carole Lagrenade

*LE VECU GAI ET LESBIEN TROUVE-T-IL LA PLACE QUI LUI REVIENT DANS
LE MILIEU UNIVERSITAIRE?

*AVEZ-VOUS DÉJÀ ESSAYÉ DE PRÉSENTER UN PROJET AYANT COMME OBJET
L'HOMOSEXUALITÉ?

Il y a bien des chances pour que votre intérêt à traiter d'une telle problématique ne soit pas partagé par vos collègues ou vos directeurs de recherche. C'est pour cela qu'un groupe de professeurs de l'UQAM a mis sur pied le F.I.E.R.H. Il vise à contribuer à l'enseignement et à la recherche dans le respect des traditions universitaires, de la liberté académique, des exigences de la recherche scientifique et de la production culturelle.

Le F.I.E.R.H. s'adresse aux femmes et aux hommes, professeur/e/s, chargé/e/s de cours, étudiant/e/s, chercheuses et chercheurs, et à toute personnes qui s'intéressent déjà ou qui souhaitent s'intéresser d'une manière ou d'une autre au phénomène homosexuel dans le cadre de leur travail d'intervention, de leur enseignement et/ou de leurs recherches. La participation à des activités ne présume aucunement de l'orientation sexuelle de celles et ceux qui y prennent part.

Une rencontre mensuelle est prévue en vue d'organiser un mini-colloque permettant de faire l'inventaire des travaux sur les homosexualités. Notez que ce forum n'est pas à caractère militant.

Si vous êtes intéressé/e/s par nos activités, vous pouvez recevoir le
procès-verbal de notre première réunion ou assister à notre prochaine
rencontre en communiquant avec:

Guy Ménard, professeur, département des sciences religieuses
Robert Comeau, professeur, département d'histoire. 282-8427
Université de Québec à Montréal
C.P. 8888, Succursale A
Montréal, Québec
H3C 3P8

CET APPEL S'ADRESSE PARTICULIÈREMENT AUX FEMMES AFIN QUE NOUS SOYONS
PLUS NOMBREUSES DANS L'ÉQUIPE DU F.I.E.R.H., si vous préférez vous
pouvez m'appeler au 252-8410.

* * * * *